# Nigeria's Educational System in a Globalizing World

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**Abstract -** *The world is in the midst of an electronic communications revolution. Electronic information flows across national boundaries. But not every nation is in this information technology jamboree at the same paste and frequency. Many people in Nigeria for reasons of technology, infrastructure, or socioeconomic status do not have access to electronic information. Telecommunication has changed the speed and method of doing the business of education all over the globe. It has transformed the world into a computerized global village with easy access to scholarly publications and new academic innovations round the globe. Thus, information technology is an inevitable tool in the 21st Century Education. Nigerian scholarly articles as well as Nigeria universities information on the internet is very scanty. It is therefore a challenge for Nigeria to haste and computerize her educational system so that she can compete effectively in the global market place. It will be erroneous to argue that modern technology is the answer to all of human problems. And it is unassailably true that Nigeria's educational problems are not from the 'harshness and the niggardliness of nature'. Obviously, the Nigerian attitude towards information technology is a major part of the problem. In fact, a big chunk of it lies, on how to restructure the educational system in line with current technology development and its adoption and acceptability as along with the new information technologies are new challenges in getting accurate and reliable information from around the world.*

**Keywords:** Nigeria, Educational System, Information Technology

## I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has become a major source of social change and has had unprecedented impact on the educational systems of nations across the world. Globalization creates spectacular opportunities for increasing the dissemination of information and dialogue (Nelly, 2005). Globalization is the latest technological effort in reducing the physical distance among nations and societies of the world through information transfer at speed that is hitherto unknown in information technology. (Marwa, 1999). Globalization involves a new consciousness of the world as a single place; the world is hence described as a 'global village'. It has been described as "the concrete structure of the world as a whole that is, a glowing awareness at a global level that the world is a continuously constructed environment (Marshall, 1998). The world has therefore become borderless taking into cognizance the flow of information through modern technologies.

Globalization is a process, which has affected many areas of human life, one of those being education. Presently, many developing countries have experienced growth in the educational facilities available to them due to the entry of institution from the West; some believe that this process is an invaluable opportunity for the people of the developing countries to raise their skills and standards of Education (Chinnammai, 2005).

ICT is an accepted acronym of the word Information Communication Technology. It is a diverse set of technology and technological tool used to communicate, disseminate, store and manage information. This means that ICT helps in storage and management of information.

ICT as described by Mann (2002) encompasses a range of application, communication and administration. This includes the use of computer system, internet, electronic-learning, CD-ROM, m-learning, online data base, library services and fax machine.

The introduction of ICT into universities clearly changed the way education is conducted (Lukman, 2012). It paves the way for a new pedagogical approach, where students are expected to play more active role than before. Using information and even known ICT as a tool in education, students should be able to communicate, create preservatives in power

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points, and interact with colleagues and teachers using technology. According to Yusuf (2005), that culture and society, which are major factors of education, have adjusted to meet the challenges of the knowledge age. These prevalence and rapid development in ICT has transformed human society from the information age to the knowledge age. The use of ICT in education by staffs and students is becoming a necessity as it can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning in any tertiary institutions. Information communication technology is a key tool that is having a revolution impact on educational methodology globally; however, this revolution is not adopted and widespread in Nigerian universities, so it needs to be strengthened to reach the large percentage of the population.

## II. Nigeria's Education System in a Globalizing World

It is interesting to note that, even in today's globalizing world, where the world is being globalised; traditional education still continues to exist as the form of socialization, cultural instruction and vocational training. Be it as it may, globalization has come to stay as it reflects the idea that life is a process and that human beings or a nation's existence is a process that unfolds with time. Ogunleye (2009) states that 'globalization essentially, has three dimensions which are economic, political and cultural and it has undergone a long historical process that is sweeping across the whole world and turning it into a global village'.

Due to all these, the Nigerian educational system needs to key-into the globalization process through ICT so as to put in place an educational system that would be globally competitive. This is because the state of education in Nigeria today is pathetic. It is so because of the decaying infrastructure, Nigerian schools are grossly under-funded; its educational system hardly uses the computer system, internet / intranet and so on, schools are not on the internet. This ugly scenario has made scholars and educational analysts to wonder about Nigerian educational system. These issues will be treated under some topics which are; Globalization and its conceptual usage, globalization and education in Nigeria and the need for the globalization of Nigeria's educational system.

## Globalization and its conceptual usages

According to Ibrahim (2002), 'globalization is not a single unified phenomenon but rather "a syndrome of processing and activities, which embody a set of idea

and a policy framework organized round the global division of Labour and Power'. In putting the concept of globalization in the right perspective, two strands of thought on globalization have found expression in many scholarly works. These thought are conceived from two contrasting paradigm namely globalization as interdependence and globalization as imperialism. Hence Olaniyan and Obadara (2006) views globalization as the process of growing interconnection and interdependence in the modern world. It is generated by growing economic, cultural and political cooperation and links as well as the need to respond together to global problems which can be solved only on a planetary scale. As education is a global phenomenon that requires interconnection and interdependence, the Nigerian educational system cannot however, excuse itself from this global social movement. This global movement is powered by three forces namely: technological revolution, economic liberalization, and democratic system of governance. It is no longer news that the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in all stages of education in different parts of the world has raised the quality and accessibility of education. Ogunleye (2009) asserted that globalization is the increasing interaction of national economies through the removal of barriers to every country like never before such that what happens to people in one part of the world will have direct consequences on the others; in a complete different part. Indeed, education which is a socio-cultural phenomenon has been globalised and countries across the globe have taken advantage of the globalization of education. Today, people stay in the remotest part of their village and attend colleges and university via ICT facilities.

## Globalization and Education in Nigeria

The fundamental instrument for this increasing transformation is technology, especially computer technology and the evolution of low cost, global communication system which constitutes major challenges that will dominate and will fundamentally sharpen development in the 21st century. The revolution in computer technology has led to the advancement of information transmission and business transactions across the global system. These changes that have occurred in computer technology have brought about tremendous improvement in all facets of human endeavours. The re-engineering of the school curriculum is a condition for Nigeria to be a member of the global community. Obanya (2006) emphasized that

there is no way in which Nigeria can escape working toward achieving the development goals set by the international community. Obanya further explained, that Nigerians have no choice in the matter but responsibility, which the young ones of today have to ensure that with the help of ICT and globalization, Nigeria falls in line with global forward march of the 21$^{st}$ century.

One fundamental impact created by globalization in education sector is the use of computer technology. This refers to all kinds of use that computer has been put to use in educational setting including, drill and practice, tutorials, simulations, instructional management supplementary exercise programming, database development using word processing and many other applications (Etim, Akpan and Ibok, 2013). Related to what Etim et al stated earlier; Nwana (2009), Okoli (2012), and Ekpo (1998) have all agreed that computer technology in education could be for independent use, small and large group presentation, or as materials supplementing traditional chalk and talk method. Some computer related terms that are useful to educational system are:

**Computer Assisted Learning (CAL)**: This refers to uses like the simulations, tutorials, drills and practice which can assist educators as supplements of their traditional-teachers-lead-instruction or by the computer themselves.

**Computer Managed Instruction (CMT):** This refers to all the benefits that the school and staff get from the use of computer. It may be to organize students' data, make instructional decisions, evaluate students test performance and guide them to appropriate instructional resources, or to keep their progress records.

**Internet Based Learning (IBL)**: This refers to the connection of two or more networks together; they form what is called the inter-work. Millions of computers all over the world are globally inter-connected for the purpose of communication and is called the internet. The internet contains rich materials stored on them in various site in the form of documentation and supplementary materials, videos, various computers programmes and digital resources. Programmes and facility found on the internet include electronic mail (e-mail) news group, chat rooms and instant messaging-module, gopher, telnet, remote login, skype and many others. One can use these programmes and facilities for managing, communicating and facilitating learning in education process in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world.

**Mobile e-Resources**: These are the digital devices that one can move with from one place to another. They are very useful in educational system and play a vital role in programme production. Some of the mobile e-resources are the MP3, MP4, MP5, GSM handset, digital camera, camcorder, digital projector, electronic board, west band amplifier, desktop, laptop, notebook and palmtop computers etc. It is interesting to note that in today's global world, e-learning resources are used by both learners and teachers alike. Teachers use e-learning programmes that bring about the effectiveness of educational system with better methods of imparting knowledge and for research. Learners on the other hand use e-learning skill to perfect their abilities, update their knowledge and learn with ease and at convenience.

Despite the efforts made by globalization to make education more accessible and quality driven, the Nigerian educational system is yet to take full advantage of this globalization towards education. To this end, Ekpo (1998) observed that approaches towards facilitating and utilization of e-learning resources have achieved limited success in terms of availability and sustained use in the classroom, making the factual authenticity a dream. It must be noted according to Okoli (2012) that, the needs and problems of the society change from time to time, so education must change to meet the new challenges of the society.

**The Need for the Globalization of Nigeria's Educational System**

These revolutionary ideas of globalization need to find an unhindered access to Nigeria's educational system. This is because, we live in an information age where information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools like, internet, digital projectors, desktop etc are making education elsewhere in the world, affordable, accessible and with quality attached to it. On this note Hamilton-Ekeke (2011) posits that ICTs can help the Nigeria educational system in management of current global challenges in the following ways:

- ICTs have helped prepare individuals for workplace. One of the most commonly cited reasons for using ICTs in the classroom has been to better prepare the current generation of students for the world of work where ICTs, particularly computers, internet and related technologies, are becoming more and more common;
- ICTs help expand access to education, that is, It is a potentially powerful tool for extending educational opportunities, both formal and non-formal to previously under-served environment such as rural

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populations groups traditionally excluded from education due to cultural or social reasons such as ethnic minorities, girls and women, persons with disabilities and the elderly as well as all others unable to enroll on campus;

- ICTs help improve the quality of education where high productivity is the end product. It helps an individual to be able to prioritize, plan and manage programme and projects to achieve desired result. And the ability to apply what one has learned in the classroom to real life events;

It is shocking to note that, Nigeria's educational system has found it extremely difficult to move with this global trend in the educational system, hence, the poor rating of Nigerians universities among global institutions. For instance, in the January 2006 webometric ranking of African universities by cybermetric research group, an organization based in Spain, listed Nigerian universities among Africa top 100 universities, but they were poorly ranked below the top 50 universities on the continent (Tile Net, 2006). The first Nigerian university among the 100 list is the University of Ibadan and ranked 57$^{th}$, followed by Obafemi Awolowo University which ranked 69$^{th}$, then the University of Benin which ranked 78$^{th}$, University of Lagos which ranked 90$^{th}$, while University of Jos, ranked 98$^{th}$. It is quite unfortunate that South African universities dominated the ranking, while universities of lower economic African countries like Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Kenya, Uganda, are a few ranked ahead of Nigerian universities. Also, in the 2008 academic ranking of world universities, published by centre for world class university, Shangai Jiao Tong University, China, no Nigeria universities was among the best 500 in the world. Devastatingly, in the latest ranking of webometric ranking of world universities released in January 2012, no Nigerian university is in the first 1,600 universities as the highest ranked Nigerian university was university of Benin, ranked 1,639$^{th}$ in the world.

What then is responsible for this poor performance of Nigerian universities in the educational world ranking system? The National Universities Commission (NUC) has advanced many reasons for this. But three reasons out of the many are;

- Scanty attention paid to presenting findings of research conducted by scholars in Nigerian universities in a web-searchable form which manifest in publishing in low impact local journals

without links and also non-publishing in electronic journals;

- Absence of Nigerian universities on the internet in a form that can be picked by the radar of cybermetric research group and lack of up to date and scanty content of the websites of Nigerian universities and;
- Poor funding of university education which is a reflection of the situation in primary and secondary education in Nigeria.

The above reasons advanced by the NUC as to the poor ranking of Nigerian universities globally, has left no doubt that the educational system in Nigeria is globally backward. What needs to be done is to key-into the technological revolution, by making available ICT facilities and proper utilization in the education system, to bring about creativity and innovativeness in the global educational system. These march towards the actualization of ICT in the Nigerian educational system will definitely be challenged by constraints like poor funding, these constraints should not prevent Nigeria from taking the path that would eventually bring educational prosperity.

**Exploring the Benefits of ICT in the Educational Sector**

The challenges the education sector posse to development of the nation calls for a serious attention of this sector. This threat was not there in the early post colonial era, because facilities and human resources were attained with the number of students. Today, with the gory and dilapidated buildings, ill-equipped libraries and laboratories, couple with unqualified teachers and discrepancy in the ratio of teachers to student, only the exploration of the benefits of ICT could correct the abnormalities in this sector.

The government through National Information Development Agency (NIITA) embarked on ways of redeeming the old image of the sector, which will thereafter make it retrace the steps in securing growth and development for the nation. The agency has design laudable ways which will make virtually all Nigerians computer literates and these believe will resuscitate the dying educational sector, these include:

1. The agency came up with its design of Information and Communication Technology Development (ICTD) initiative, the policy aims at using ICT for development in every human endeavour - the application in the educational sector.
2. NIITA are aware of the fact that teeming population of the nation dwell in rural areas, the agency began

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Establishment of Rural Information and Communication Centers (RITCS) which will cater for assessment of educational and receiving information online in the rural areas which will facilitate learning aside from classroom business. The number of such centers across the nation is now over 400. The rural areas with their challenges of generating power to make the center work, the agency provide the centre with solar system portable generating equipment.

3. The agency also aims at providing critical number of Nigerian school teachers the knowledge of application of ICT facilities in teaching and learning. This will serve as a booster to teachers as there would be availability of materials to research on, and it will also provide a vehicle for the train and trainer scheme in ICT which will drive development of human resources at school. As laudable and brilliant these aims are, they require well planned implementation strategies before they could be goals. However the agency has set out measures to aid the materialization of the objectives. It has proposed the implementation plan which aim at training a critical mass of Nigerian school teachers in the basic principles and practice of ICT, tertiary institutions should also imbibe the system so as to ensure the application of ICT in teaching, lecturing and learning modes.

## III. CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

Globalization has affected every sphere of society and human living and so has been defined by writers in various ways in relation to the aspect being considered. To keep pace with other countries of the world, all the forces of technology need to be brought to education. The application of technology and technological systems and concepts alone however is not likely to solve the whole problem of education unless more is also heard about the art of teaching and the thoughtful organization and application of instructional measures for creative control of educational system. Globalized information network is the ultimate transformation of world culture. Proper understanding of the concepts taught in schools depends to a large extent on the nature and utilization of impute used during the teaching learning process. Networking is here to stay and education has no choice but embrace it. This is a time to strike a balance between opportunities provided by globalization (information and communication technology). Globalizations has had many obvious effects on educational technology and communication systems and change the way education is delivered as well as roles played by both teachers and students. Education therefore remains an indispensable variable in the development of the Nation. There is no doubt that the advancement in technology and information transmission is taking shape alongside the explosion of the new knowledge in all fields of endeavour. The study recommends globalization as an element of educational communication and instructional technology which encompasses the processes of teaching and learning.

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